

# National Modern Languages SCITT

## Complaints Procedure

**Important:** this document can only be considered valid when viewed on the Trust or School website. If this document has been printed or saved to another location, you must check that the version number on your copy matches that of the document online.

<b>Version number:</b>	1.4
<b>Implementation date:</b>	August 2017
<b>Next review:</b>	January 2022
<b>Name and job title of author:</b>	Katrin Sredzki-Seamer, Director of the National Modern Languages SCITT
<b>Target audience:</b>	Staff / Trainees / O.I.A
<b>Related documents:</b>	NML SCITT Academic Appeals Policy, NML SCITT Attendance and Absence Policy, NML SCITT Cause for Concern Policy, NML SCITT Disciplinary Policy, NML SCITT Fitness to Practise Policy, NML SCITT Fitness to Study Policy, NML SCITT Suitability Declaration Policy



## Contents

1. Purpose .....	3
2. Principles.....	3
3. Scope .....	3
4. Procedure.....	4
Stage One.....	4
Stage Two .....	4
Stage Three .....	5
Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) .....	5
Possible Outcomes.....	5
Performance .....	5

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of any complaints system is to address any such concerns in a positive and structured pro-active way. This policy sets out the procedures to be followed in responding to complaints received in The National Modern Languages SCITT. Appeals against decisions taken by TNMLS should be dealt with through the appropriate *Disciplinary or Appeals policy*.

## 2. Principles

The National Modern Languages SCITT will:

- ensure that all trainee teachers have equitable access to its services and resources;
- be non-discriminatory and promote the goals of anti-discrimination, access and equality; and
- take reasonable steps to ensure its services, programmes and decision making promote an inclusive culture.

The Complaints Procedure will:

- encourage resolution of problems by informal means wherever possible;
- be easily accessible and publicised;
- be simple to understand and use;
- be impartial;
- be non-adversarial;
- allow swift handling with established time;
- limits for action and keeping people informed of the progress;
- ensure a full and fair investigation;
- respect people's desire for confidentiality;
- address all the points at issue and provide an effective response and appropriate redress, where necessary;
- provide information to The NML SCITT Strategic Board so that services can be improved.

## 3. Scope

The scope of the policy covers most complaints that the NML SCITT is likely to receive:

This includes for example:

- Complaints about ITT personnel;
- Complaints about placement schools;
- Issues with the ITT programme;
- Health & Safety issues;

- Complaints regarding the working environment;
- Bullying, Harassment, Discrimination and in general Dignity at Work concerns.

It is usual to disregard anonymous complaints unless someone is prepared to substantiate them. However, anonymous complaints may be investigated at the discretion of the SCITT Director with advice from Chorus Education Trust HR.

This policy prohibits reprisals against trainees or employees because they have complained or have provided information regarding a complaint. Alleged reprisals are subject to the same **complaints procedures** and penalties as complaints of discrimination and will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter

## 4. Procedure

When initial informal attempts to resolve the issue are unsuccessful and the person raising the concern remains dissatisfied and wishes to take the matter further, then formal complaints and appeals will arise and formal procedures will be invoked.

Formal complaints will be referred to the SCITT Director in the first instance, who may judge that the complaint is best dealt with by another suitable person. If the complaint is about the SCITT Director, this should be referred to the Chief Executive Officer of Chorus Education Trust for consideration. The same procedures, as detailed below, will apply.

Three stages will normally be sufficient to resolve most complaints:

### Stage One

Complaint is heard by a School Based Subject Mentor or the Course Leader, or the Hub Lead Teacher. All documentation and communication is collated and available to all parties throughout. The person the complaint is referred to cannot also be the subject of the complaint.

If the matter cannot be resolved at an informal level, the person making the complaint will be asked to put their complaint in writing and also where possible identify the resolution they are hoping to achieve.

### Stage Two

The written complaint will be sent to the SCITT Director. There is a commitment to respond to the complaint or appeal if possible within five working days. The complaint will be fully investigated and a resolution is then sought at this stage.

As soon as possible after receiving the complaint, the individuals named in the complaint(s) will be notified and will be asked to provide their response. The respondent has the right to be accompanied at all meetings by a colleague or union representative.

With the consent of the complainant and the respondent, the investigating officer may attempt to mediate a settlement of a complaint at any point prior to or during an investigation. Once the investigation is complete, the investigating officer will prepare a written report summarising investigation findings.

HR advice and support should be provided throughout the process.

## Stage Three

The complaint is heard by sub-group of Hub Lead Teachers' Committee; this may also be referred to The SCITT Strategic Board or The Appeals Committee if deemed necessary by the Hub Lead Teachers' Committee. A full review of all correspondence relating to the complaint is then undertaken and a resolution sought. If the trainee teacher is not satisfied with this outcome, they are then eligible to refer the matter to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) and a 'Completion of Procedure' is issued.

## Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)

Trainees who have exhausted the NML SCITT's internal procedures for complaints or appeals may bring their complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIAHE) within one calendar year of receiving a **Completion of Procedures letter**. The OIAHE's website (at [www.oiahe.org.uk](http://www.oiahe.org.uk)) contains full information, and the OIAHE can be contacted at OIA, Second Floor, Abbey Gate, 57 – 75 Kings Road, Reading, RG1 3AB, tel: 0118 959 9813 email: [enquiries@oiahe.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@oiahe.org.uk). Anyone wishing to pursue a complaint through the OIAHE must complete a special Scheme Application Form, downloadable copies of which are available from the website.

## Possible Outcomes

The complaint should be investigated thoroughly and a clear understanding of what the complainant feels would put the matter right should be clarified and noted. At every stage, the communication between all parties is recorded and collated, with all those involved kept informed throughout.

Every attempt should be made to secure a satisfactory resolution which may include for example:

- An apology;
- Mediation;
- An explanation;
- An admission that the situation could have been handled differently or better;
- An assurance that the event complained of will not recur;
- An explanation of the steps that have been taken to ensure that it will not happen again;
- An undertaking to review SCITT policies in light of the complaint;
- Disciplinary action or informal warnings/management instruction if complain is upheld.

## Performance

Will be judged by the successful resolution of concerns or complaints monitored by the SCITT Director and the SCITT Strategic Board. The Office of the Independent Adjudicator will also keep a record of complaints they receive concerning the SCITT.

## Publishing policy

This policy is available through the SCITT website and our NML SCITT Intranet. A copy can also be request via our NML SCITT office.

Trainees who have exhausted the NML SCITT's internal procedures regarding complaints may bring their complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIAHE) within one calendar year of receiving a Completion of Procedures letter. The OIAHE's website (at [www.oiahe.org.uk](http://www.oiahe.org.uk)) contains full information, and the OIAHE can be contacted at: OIA, Second Floor, Abbey Gate, 57 – 75 Kings Road, Reading, RG1 3AB, tel: 0118 959 9813 email: [enquiries@oiahe.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@oiahe.org.uk). Anyone wishing to pursue a complaint through the OIAHE must complete a special Scheme Application Form, downloadable copies of which are available from the website.